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possessed in favour of his mistress. So the wanderer in the graveyard by night in the uncertain light of the misty moon judges a tall gravestone to be a "sheeted ghost." His eye is not at fault. His judgment is. He receives the impression from the object truly, but he refers his impression to the wrong group or store of previous knowledge. He should refer it to optical phenomena, diffraction of light, and the rest. He actually does think of pictures and stories of vague appearances, of human shapes without human substance, and all the superstitious imaginings of poor frail human nature. His senses are not under control of his reason.

*(To be continued.)*

## TRAINING LESSONS TO MOTHERS.

BY THE LADY ISABEL MARGESSON.

IN these days parents are, I think, anxious to be more in touch than they used to be with the education of their children. The revolution in the educational world brought about by the conviction that a knowledge of certain laws of physiology and psychology must underlie any teaching that is to be effective, is now an old story. The effect of this revolution has, however, been lessened by the fact that parents have as yet, to a great extent, been untouched by it. Without their intelligent co-operation, scientific education could not proceed to its full development.

Parents are now roused to feel that there is a mass of sound scientific knowledge, moral and physical, which has been accumulated, and which they can only neglect to their own and their children's future disadvantage.

But the process of being roused does not always leave clear notions behind it, and what parents now desire is to know how to put into practice the principles of the so-called "New Education;" for they are determined that their children shall profit by the many opportunities of fuller knowledge which are given at the present day.

The first step on the road to a practical application of these principles is to be convinced that they constitute the only scientific basis of education. We must study them with care and thought, and although it may sometimes be difficult to find time to read the works of specialists such as Herbert Spencer, Locke, Sully, Froebel, Pestalozzi, we shall, if we make the effort, be rewarded by learning how to fulfil our highest vocation of training our children to be "worthy in their generation."

The Parents' National Educational Union here offers us its help. It cannot, of course, supply the place of that individual



study of the subject, which can only be based on the exercise of man's own thought. But the Parents' Union can and will act as a sort of middleman to bring parents and great thinkers on education into touch with each other.

The Belgravia and Westminster Branch of the Union has just had an illustration of the kindness of educationalists. Mrs. Walter Ward (who perhaps is better known as Miss Emily Lord) has given her time and labour for sixteen years to the cause of education, and to making known its truest and highest principles.

She has an "Educational Mission," but up to the present it has not been so much to parents as to teachers and children. During last November Mrs. Ward consented to give a course of ten lessons to mothers, and it is of these that I wish to speak, as I think they were highly suggestive of means by which parents may be greatly helped and strengthened in their own self-training.

The lessons (of two hours each) were given in the house of one of the members of the class, who kindly lent us her dining-room for the occasion. We were thirteen mothers in all, few enough to allow of plenty of discussion, and to enable each of us to be in touch with Mrs. Ward.

The first morning was devoted to teaching a few elementary principles of psychology, which serve as the foundations of a scientific education, so that on future occasions we might go back to the "Grammar" when perplexed. This lesson was, I think, of special interest, as going to the root of the matter and as helping to take away the feeling of our being only "amateur dabblers," which haunted some of us. In our various difficulties Mrs. Ward was able to refer us back to elementary truths, and to show us how we might judge methods and principles by the light of unchangeable laws.

Two of Mrs. Ward's lessons were on teaching arithmetic. How many women like to confess that until they were grown up they did not know there was anything rational in the Multiplication Table? In these days we see our children taught the property of number in the concrete form before the abstract, and find that it is thoroughly understood by them, and we know that even those of us of whom in our schoolroom days it was said, "So-and-so never could do arithmetic," might have passed happy hours over that hated, because incomprehensible, study. Mrs.

Ward's lesson on arithmetic showed us that it was quite simple and easy to teach children much about numbers out of school hours. In doing this parents prevent the sharp division between school-life and "out-of-school-life," in, at least, one branch of study, and perhaps other subjects would in time be treated in the same way, and parents would become real co-operators with the teachers and children. In this way the unity and continuity of education would be made more secure.

The intelligent sympathy of parents cannot, however, be given if they are entirely in the dark as to the reasons why the child is more easily taught by one method than by another, and as to what the best method is. If this sympathy is lacking, their criticisms, which, from their greater breadth of view, should be of such inestimable advantage both to the teachers and scholars, are entirely thrown away.

Now, I venture to say, that after having heard Mrs. Ward's two lessons on arithmetic, those members who were present will be on the watch to find out in what way their children are being taught the properties of number. I think they will not be satisfied until they are taught by a method that commends itself to their reason.

Another day Mrs. Ward gave us a most delightful lesson on "Why and How to Cultivate the Artistic Faculty in Children." She showed us how the foundations of the artistic faculty are laid in very early years by teaching children to observe; how their senses of touch and sight must be trained to be accurate and discriminating to notice colour, grouping, and texture; and how, at the same time, children should be taught to express their ideas by brushwork, drawing, modelling, and building—for what a child begins to try to represent, that he begins to understand. Mrs. Ward also spoke of the difficulty in estimating the worth of children's artistic attempts, and the need of true and sympathetic criticism. She warned her hearers against possible discouragement, and advised them to clearly show their appreciation of any care and industry displayed, so that the child might be guided and stimulated to fresh efforts.

I think I have said enough to show parents how much fresh light Mrs. Ward threw on this question, and on their own attitudes to their children's efforts. Should we not be careful in our super-



vision of this part of education, seeing how large are its possibilities?

Mrs. Ward also gave a lesson on "Children's Stories, Games, and Songs," and suggested many tests by which to discover their value.

Mrs. Ward said that one of the merits of a story is that it should influence the child by the power of example.

But the real power of example lies in the special inspiration to some particular principle of conduct, and one should not allow a child to think an example is a pattern to be copied, and thus unduly stimulate them to a spurious life. For this reason, the time and place of the story should be different to our own, as, for instance, the parable of "the Good Samaritan."

Mrs. Ward also pointed out that in games a "free romp" is not good, because it does not result in well-being for all. Organised games are very good for children, as affording much insight into character and many opportunities for self-discipline, ethical training, and physical exercise.

Mrs. Ingham Brooke, a friend of Mrs. Ward, who had been lecturing on education in America as well as in England, had promised to give us two lessons on "Nature Teaching." We looked forward to these with great interest, although we hardly understood the importance of the subject.

Mrs. Brooke showed that Natural Science cannot be taught with advantage to children without understanding the great fundamental truths taught by Froebel and other great educators—viz.:

(1) That the faculties should be trained before facts are taught.

(2) That only the knowledge gained by his own observation is of use to the child.

Both these principles demand much faith and patience in the teacher. Faith in the "unseen product," the growth of faculties and development of character. Patience, that the knowledge which apparently could be so easily given to the child should be gradually arrived at by the child himself, by allowing him to form, and guiding him in forming, his own conclusions.

I think the patience needed was fully appreciated by the mothers present, as we all know the temptation quietly to "tell the child" instead of leading him to find out.

But to those parents who are convinced that education is not

limited to schoolroom hours, Nature Teaching comes as a part of education in which the parents are peculiarly fitted to share. The child is on our side from the first. His love of the natural world is always keen, and his observing powers are great. The parents have only to give the child lessons on flowers or animals to find this out, and they will be surprised at the end of a few months, during which Nature lessons have been regularly given, how great are the advantages to themselves and to the child, and that they are links which bind the schoolroom and everyday life together.

I should like to tell you some of the results which Mrs. Brooke assured us may be expected from Nature Teaching.

(1) The power of seeing will greatly increase. Children are naturally quick to see, and this inherent capacity *grows less from want of use and training*. This is a startling view for us, when we consider how anxious we are to make our children's capabilities as large as possible.

(2) The child will acquire an understanding of imagery and language. Nature Teaching helps him to learn the word and its meaning together, so that they are never disunited. Imagery becomes real to the child when he understands the reference to objects in Nature. Mrs. Brooke gave an interesting illustration of this last point. She gave a class of children lessons on all the animals mentioned in "Hiawatha" for a whole term. The next term she taught the children to recite the poem, and no one could doubt that to the children the poem was full of meaning and a source of intellectual pleasure.

(3) The study of Nature will give a keen appreciation of art. The mind of the child will become so stored with beautiful forms, that his taste will thereby be formed to love the beautiful and turn from the unlovely.

(4) The life spent out of doors will become much more full. The child will be taught to notice the form and colour of trees in summer and winter, to watch for birds and insects, to compare the shapes of leaves, and to make collections which accumulate solely by the child's own exertion and gradual knowledge.

(5) Composition will be greatly facilitated. A child taught to write all he knows about an animal or a flower, after a few lessons on the subject, and when his mind is full



of facts found out by his own observation and thoroughly understood, will have no difficulty in "*what* to say," only in "*how* to say it!"

(6) The law of consequences. Use and disuse will have to be pointed out to the child, and his attention called to it in many ways, that it may sink deep into his mind, and the lesson that "what a man sows that he will reap" will not be forgotten.

(7) The child's spiritual nature will be developed and strengthened in the way most gradual and unforced. As he sees the reverence and skill with which his parents unfold to him the manipulation of God's thought and will, the child will be led up Nature's great pathway to God, and impressions of reverence, love, and obedience will be awakened and associated with the strongest and earliest pleasures.

We began to see, from Mrs. Brooke's lectures, that we cannot leave the child to Nature, even though there be an instinctive love for it, but that we must guide and develop it; and, as Miss Shirreff says in her interesting book, "*The Kindergarten at Home*," "it is the part of a good teacher to give permanence to the impressions by opening up new sources of interest and pleasure in each object, by leading the child to observe, to compare, to learn something new about it and its relations to other objects, and *thereby* making *his instinctive tendencies* the means of moral and intellectual training." Elsewhere Miss Shirreff says: "The impressions that are transient may remain utterly barren for any real culture of the heart, the imagination, or the understanding."

After Mrs. Brooke had finished her lecture we gathered around her to tell her our difficulties, for those of us who were most convinced of the truths contained in the lecture were most in despair. We had to confess to a lamentable want of knowledge of natural science. Mrs. Brooke said she would very strongly urge us to begin giving our children Nature lessons in spite of this, for she assured us we could and should carefully prepare a lesson once a week, taking any one side of the subject that interested us most. Mrs. Brooke told us that she herself never gave a Nature lesson without preparation, and that with the help of a good book on natural science for children we could *all* of us give the lessons. She told us to remember that skill and

knowledge in doing this would come gradually, and we should find a rich reward to ourselves.

Mrs. Brooke recommended us to get one of three books by Miss Arabella Buckley—"Life and her Children," "Winners in Life's Race," and "The Fairyland of Science," and, if possible, to procure pictures or objects to illustrate our lesson.

I think it will be readily admitted that this course of lessons was on thoroughly practical lines. I have not touched on other interesting subjects about which Mrs. Ward gave us most valuable teaching and enlightenment. I may briefly state them: "Methods of Teaching," "Concrete Geography," "The Place of Manual Work in primary and later Teaching."

Nor have I time to tell how Mrs. Ward made her class go through most—if not all—the "occupations" so loved by children under seven or eight years of age. Mrs. Ward wished us to do these things ourselves; and we proved the truth of her words, that you cannot really understand the meaning of an occupation, or put yourself in a child's place, until you have experienced the same feelings, and can *feel* you understand them.

Mrs. Ward explained that we should look in all work, not for utility alone, but for training and developing the child's powers, and towards giving him "a foundation" (I quote Miss Shirreff again) "of good mental habits and manual dexterity, so that when the hour for actual labour arrives, and there is no leisure for the acquisition of such habits, the child will quickly master ordinary work, and be fit to learn some higher kind of special work."

Mrs. Ward also answered that frequent objection of "how a child is ever to learn to pay attention to what is difficult in later life if he has in early years been taught by means of things that he likes?" She said that what seemed to *us* easy lessons are not easy to a child if they cause him to apply himself with great earnestness and care, and that interesting does not mean easy; they are only exactly suited to the age, and teach the very habits of application and attention that we thought would only be obtained by learning more difficult but uninteresting lessons. Mrs. Ward showed how children's involuntary attention should be trained from the earliest years, and that voluntary attention will be the natural and inevitable outcome.

I have said enough about these lessons to show that they were of great value, and that they helped to clear our rather confused



ideas on the new methods of modern education ; but, in conclusion, I should like to suggest that classes of a similar kind should be formed wherever there is a branch of the P.N.E.U. A few earnest mothers would have little difficulty in arranging a course of lessons to be given in the same easy way on such matters as Physiology, History, Arithmetic, Nature Teaching Modelling, &c.

All the subjects which may be taught to our children in a lifeless and essentially uneducational way, and be therefore utterly barren of real culture, may be, and ought to be, taught in the only true and scientific way. In future we shall be in a position to superintend the education of our children from the enlightened standpoint of people who have studied the question.

I think we can no longer consider education as only a "matter of opinion," or of rival "systems." The fact that there is a Science of Education imposes on all parents the duty of studying, at any rate, its elements.

[The Editor earnestly hopes that "Mothers' Training Classes" on this delightful pattern will be established in many centres. Such classes were part of the original scheme of the P.N.E.U.]

## "IN MEMORIAM."

BY DOROTHEA BEALE,

*Principal of the Cheltenham Ladies' College.*

"DER mensch macht die Welt, aber er schafft sie nicht." This is true not only for the world which exists for sense, but for that universe of conceptions which is the home of our spirit. Each age has its own conceptions—those of Plato cannot be those of Dante, nor Dante's those of Milton ; and so the poets of our own day speak to us as those of distant times cannot. We may enter into the thoughts of others, but these enter into ours ; they strike sympathetic chords, and bring out music for prosaic souls : thus Dante was a power in his own age that he can never be again. Those who said "see the man who has been in hell" had been there themselves, and seen what we cannot see. Milton affects us as the painting of Michael Angelo ; for him the serpent, the deadly fruit, were objective to sense, not the spiritual realities they are to us ; and even the poets of our own age and country live in such different spheres, that we need to adjust our view if we would learn to know them. Tennyson is the nearest to most of us : he stands between Wordsworth and Browning. To the former, the world of Nature is the grand reality ; man is little more than an accident—the inanimate is that which truly lives. For Browning, the magnificent scenery which he paints is merely introduced as the stage on which the human drama is enacted : the soul is the one reality, "the incidents in its development the only thing worth noting."

Tennyson strikes the note by which we modulate from one to the other. The philosophy of our time conceives of Nature as existing only for mind ; and in Tennyson's most characteristic poem, which is as descriptive as Wordsworth's, we never lose the consciousness of the human presence : Nature is seen by us only as mirrored in mind.

Tennyson belongs to a time of comparative peace : the revolutionary period had passed away with its poets of "Sturm und Drang." He belongs to the age of reverie—like symphony